

★ ROLLERDERBY ★

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SOAP OPERAS* AEROBICS* INCEST*
OBSESSION* KISSING FOREIGNERS*
FEMALE MASTURBATION FANTASIES



10



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KISSING

by LC

Henry Holt & Co. very kindly sent me to L.A., Milpitas, Portland, Seattle, New York and Boston, where I was supposed to read from my book *Dancing Queen* as promotion, but I kissed foreigners instead. I had some theory about this being my cultural studies (seeing as how I never went to college). I believe in a hands-on approach to life, and lips-on. These are the facts:

***The two Czechs, one on each American coast, kissed with tender, beautiful and artistic souls, and no tongues, mirroring perfectly the thoughtful, gentle, interesting country from whence came the kissers.

***The Mexican was forceful and quick.

Very quick. As soon as he stuck his tongue in my mouth he was done. This was remarkably similar to how food behaved in my mouth and body during my visit to Mexico as a child.

***The New Zealander kissed like an American--lots of spirit, not a great deal of finesse--except his tongue was much firmer. It was really great. My lipstick was smeared all over my face. What I derive intellectually from this experience is that New Zealanders are great travellers--forcefully probing all other countries, and the other countries welcome them.

***A pair of Iowa City potheads posing as Scandanavi-ans kissed with no tongue and no *lips* either! It was so awful and horrifying. Sometimes my work is hard. What I learned culturally by this experience is that, yes, more than one beer blurs my fine skills of discernment. If I'd had one beer instead of two, I would've *known* they were Iowa Citians before it was too late.

***Never go to Chile. This Chilean girl ran up to me and bumped her teeth against mine and then pulled back and said abruptly, "I'm not going to let you humiliate me with your performance art!" and ran out the door.

***Likewise, the Asians ran away right after kissing me too. Literally, ran! Not walked fast. They *ran*! One was from Hong Kong and one from Taiwan. I always had a thing for Japanese guys, which somewhat extended to anyone with slanted eyes. Now I'm over it. I had to practically twist those men's scrawny little arms to get them to give me the ghost of a kiss they finally did deliver. The Orient is not all it's cracked up to be.

***Of course the German was efficient ("you could fix a clock with that tongue"). Precision has merit, but what I'd really been hoping for all tour long was to be kissed so hard and bad I'd have to scream for help. Alas, not even Germany seems to be feeling very invasive these days.

***I gave a shy, interestingly-bearded Brit three chances to bend me over the desk and beat his eternal enemy the Germans, and with his British perserverence, he did finally succeed in bending me over, but still no real pressure was applied to my lips.

***The first Canadian I kissed on tour I couldn't even remember, which is so perfect for Americans' relationship with that country --we forget it exists, except that there's snow and French people somewhere up there, but who knows what they do? There's a damn leaf on their flag. How are you going to scare anyone with

a leaf? Don't they know that all the other countries look at that leaf and think about blowing it right off the flag every time? And those Canadians put that leaf everywhere! On the car, on the butter dish, even on the *butter*! Their national animal is the beaver. The beaver can be pretty fierce, you know. They should put him on the flag, exposing his teeth threateningly.

My xenophobia was dealt a blow by the second Canadian I kissed, Mrs. Kate Landau. She grabbed my arms kind of hard and was kissing me and kissing me with those cool Canadian lips, and then I was kissing her, and I never ever wanted it to end. The pink lipgloss, blue sparkly eyeshadow, bleached flip and baby blue fuzzy sweater created appeal even before the kiss began, but the kiss itself, my God. I couldn't even say why I liked it so much. Isn't it great to be so overwhelmed you lose all articulateness? Her pink lip gloss tasted good. It tasted like a 12-year-old's lips. Kate has a cute little tongue. You don't think of tongues as being large, but take a good look at one sometime--they really are huge organs. Except for Kate's. Hers is delicate but insistent. I bet it's baby pink; I've never looked at it, though. Maybe it's brown and hideous!!

At the end of the kissing tour, I brought seven rowdy Americans and one Canadian (Kate) out to dinner with my one and only beloved Englishman, David Tibet, and his party of 16 overseas people. I think the Americans were unsettling the appetites of the English. We really are uncouth. One fellow spilled his water on a gentle English couple...twice! He was so annoying--he bit my shoulder without any encouragement whatsoever, and threw a slimy piece of meat in Queen Itchie's cleavage. When I yelled at him about the meat, he said, "Well God, what *can* I do?" Like if you can't throw meat at strangers, there's nothing left. The English felt ill and had to leave. The Americans ruined everything, like they always do. And the Americans had a good time, like they always do. Kate started talking about the English without even having the decency to wait for them to be fully departed: "If you think you like English people, all you have to do is go there. You see one and you think, 'There's one that's not so bad' when he's ten blocks away. And then the closer he gets...by block six you're going, 'Forget it!' They have no teeth! They boil everything. They boil their eggs, they boil sausage. The beer's warm and there's no head on it. If they didn't have all those wax museums, no one would go there. They'd be a third world country."

***One thing I can state with authority is that Americans of English descent are not exactly reserved in their kissing. In Seattle there were no foreigners, so I picked a cute American, whose name I forget, to represent our country. She was great. She bit me and everything. It's like all the good kissers got on the Mayflower. Actually, I shouldn't say "good kissers"--I mean the fiery ones who might be too busy doing something bad to you to even bother with kissing at all. **Turn page for Kate dancing**





← KATE
DOING A
BACKBEND
& SMOKING
A CIGARETTE
AT THE
SAME
TIME!
♡ my
hero ♡

Credits

Editor/publisher: Lisa Carver

Proof-reader: Randy Roark

This issue's cover: Jim Goad's masturbation fantasy as interpreted by Dame Darcy. & Lisa. If you like the illustrations in this magazine, you will want to order *Meat Cake* from Dame Darcy, PO Box 730, New York City 10009. If you need typing, copy-editing, proof-reading, transcription, write Randy Roark at 3105 Westwood Court, Boulder CO 80304. Rates neg. IBM and Apple computers. He's worked for Allen Ginsburg, City Lights, Rhino Records and *Rollerderby*.

Back Issues.....

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Books.....

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Dancing Queen: Essays by Lisa on really American stuff like white trash, large-breasted heiress Anna Nicole Smith and that crafty old Lawrence Welk. 138 pgs. [Henry Holt & Co.] \$12

CD.....

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**Lisa Carver, PO Box 474,
Dover NH 03821**

P.S. I have some rather gross information to disseminate, but I wish someone had told me about this before it was too late, so now I'm telling you. If you wear soft contact lenses, do not let a man come in your eye. The protein of the sperm will cloud and ruin your lens.

LETTERS

Lisa--

You didn't try *very hard* to call me--I was home and awake from 7 AM to just before 10 AM! I would have appreciated NOT walking into an empty house with nothing but a bunch of empty beer bottles to greet me on Christmas morning! You're going to have a hard time finding a store open on Christmas day. How come you've gone last-minute spastic on me? I'm going home to pop a TV dinner in the oven. It's almost noon and I'm hungry. And my feelings are feeling hurt and abused. And SAD. Yes, I am crying. Call me if/when you get home today and I'll come give out the presents. Hope to see lots of excitement in Wolfgang's eyes! Champagne, fresh squeezed orange juice and egg nog in refrig. I *had* planned a toast to holiday cheer.

--Mom

[Explanation for above note: I was late getting back from visiting my father on Christmas day. Left mother a note that I'd tried to call her and would be late making her dinner.--LC]

Dear Lisa,

I just finished your book *Dancing Queen* and I think it is so damn wonderful. I began on the 30th to read it and finished at 4:30 AM on the first, this morning. This is odd, I've never written an author before, or ever been tempted to, but with this--you are a funny, bright, beautiful, sexy, bold and energizing writer. You make me wanna shop at Kmart. You make me wanna drink. You make me wanna, well, I'm a married woman.

--Julie Lang, New York NY

P.S. This is not a psycho-stalker letter, I don't think.

Dear Lisa,

Last weekend I went out dancing and a strong-looking boy asked me in a strange accent if he could talk to me. I said yes because he was foreign and fierce. His name is Vladimir and he's from Ukraine. He lived in Russia for a short time and was in a Russian gang. Vladimir said he came to America because his fighting got his family into trouble. My pulse quickened when I heard this.

--With heart aflame, Liz Armstrong, Columbia MO

Lisa!

I attempted to *mate* with a cashier (young and cute) in one of the local stores. She was *horrified*! I was *removed*! In no way diminished, I actually crawled under the porch of a local restaurant later and spent the night there, alternately sleeping and watching people passing through the latticework. During the night I started laughing insanely, actually crying, when I realized that when I crawled out in the morning into the long grass I'd look like the first of some sinister hatchlings out of some hideous nest--the product of a most weird union! (My head being shaven, with a leaky pus-ridden knob on top. My garb rather odd too.) But I was not seen.

--Love, [name and address withheld]

window that there was a weird stormy sunset in progress. I walked out on my balcony, naked in the cold, to watch it and think about your book. I felt supremely illuminated. I thought seriously about assigning it in the class I'm teaching at U. of L. I think the students would dig it with a steam-shovel. Unfortunately, a lot of the faculty is made up of anti-porn feminists and they'd claim that by pushing this book I'm perpetuating and entrenching the rape-culture and blah-blah-blah and this might be the excuse they were looking for to show me the door.

--T.R. Johnson, Glenview KY

Lisa Carver--

I really like your girlie sex pot style. I



Liz Armstrong

Dearest Lisa Crystal Carver,

I had worked six consecutive 12-hour days when I decided I deserved an afternoon off. So I bought your book and read it in the bath. I like baths so hot that they almost burn the skin--sweat and get extra imaginative and sorta loopy. I soon realized this is the perfect way to read *Dancing Queen*. After a couple of hours, I got hit with the twirling-dizzies so that when I started getting out of the bath--the final triumphant lines of *Dancing Queen* thumping in my chest--I nearly keeled over. I steadied myself and saw out the

strip on-line and am really into cute blondes. I am moving in with my older brother's girlfriend and really want to get her drunk and giggle and kiss but she's kind of a bitch to me. I've enclosed a little story for you:

I am reading stories of little girls masturbating and cumming with chains around their waists and pinecones up their little bald cunts. Tight little bald beavers. I would never fuck a little girl. Imagine flying into bedrooms at night as they hump the corners of their pillows. I tell them they are safe and normal. I guess



Emily Lynn

that's what I wanted--some gorgeous girlfriend that masturbated too. She was so cool and sexual. Had a boyfriend that

fucked her everyday and she still masturbated. I could cover my finger in vaseline and slowly fuck a little bald twat. What age would tightly swallow my index finger? I used to fuck myself with barbie doll legs until they came out red with blood. I want to cheat on my boyfriend. I love him more than anything but I want to fuck other guys. No emotion, just dirty fucking, fast and hard, selfish and heartless. Drunken and horny we'd leave a party and fuck in a car. He'd squeeze my tits so hard he'd leave bruises, yell at me and pull my hair and fuck me from behind. I love pussies. I want to eat so much pussy. Sometimes I shave my pussy bald and put baby powder all over the mound and feel naughty all day--I want to lift up my skirt and spread open my big lips and shove my musky cunt in the boy's face. I want to rub it all

over his head and pee in his mouth. Shove his fingers up my ass and try to shit. I'd love to nibble on the head of his cock till

it swells bright red and then I'd take it in my mouth--just the tip--and take it out and let him cum all over my face. And I wouldn't tell my boyfriend because he'd be so jealous. We love each other very much.
--Emily Lynn, Ypsilanti MI

Hail Satan,
Hail Mistress of Nonconformity,
Hell-o there classy Lady!! I've read a cool review about your *Generation L Magazine* in *Conquer Now*. I relate to the description of proud, excited and groomed. Ahhhh! Yes!! I'm proud to be a 42 year old male who has a full head of hair, no pot gut, muscular body due to consistent exercise, and last but not least, excited about being a Satanist. I do, however, become very annoyed at other so-called Men. Such wimps most men seem to be. No wonder a lot of wives have affairs. Groomed!??? Huh!!! They're lucky if they even comb their hair in the morning when they get up. I've carried a comb since as far back as I can remember. Well! Hell! Evil-bye for now. Wherest Knowledge & Wisdom are hidden, so shall I be:
--"Prowling in Darkness" Wolf Raven, Reading PA

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MASTURBATION

I've been talking to a lot of people about masturbation lately for no particular reason, and I've learned that people have a lot of thoughts about it. Dame Darcy had this realization: "Men's masturbation fantasies are about women and women's are about themselves. Stuff happening to the woman." Jim Goad suggested that class differences effect fantasies: "I've noticed rich people are repelled by heavy metal and other overstated expressions of sadism. Bill Clinton plays golf and listens to jazz. He doesn't need to fantasize about power because it's a *fait accompli*." I'd extrapolate from that and say that women have such a violent and detailed fantasy life because our grand gender memory doesn't include much war or dirty fights with coal-miner co-workers after digging all day in the dark. We didn't get our oats out as much as men have historically, nor are we all that inclined to do so now, even though we finally have the opportunity. We keep our oats in. We got a lot of oats in there. We do a lot of plotting and recounting. Our lives are so much more detailed than the men's. We're imaginative, talkative, vengeful, and better-looking too!

VICKY WHEELER: I fantasize about a lot of things. Oh, boy. OK, I'm gonna be really honest--a lot about what it'd be like to have sex with a girl. And I used to really like to talk about it out loud while I was having sex with a guy. If I go out dancing, over the following week every time I masturbate I'll masturbate about somebody I danced with or somebody I saw. I used to have this storyline where I'd be forced to do things. Like have my legs pulled apart or pulled in different directions.

LISA: Did you know who was pulling?

VICKY: Um, no. I'll think of a certain person and that'll get me into it, but once I'm into it, it gets more and more abstract. So many images crisscross over my brain. I used to think of being... [giggles] of being forced to have sex in front of large groups of people.

LISA: Was there a specific locale?

VICKY: On a table. Display style.

LISA: Were you in your own home?

VICKY: No. I don't know where it was. It was a clinical setting.

LISA: Do you think you were kidnapped?

VICKY: Um...you know, I don't know! I don't know how I got there! Another

common one was being made to demonstrate certain techniques.

JESSICA HUNDLEY: What I do is I go through the bookshelf and try out different fantasies like I'm trying on outfits until I find one that fits, and I take that one to the end.

LISA: Oh, neat!

JESSICA: And then I totally immerse myself in that world. I've been masturbating really easily ever since I was a little girl. Like hanging masturbation.

LISA: What's that?

JESSICA: You just hang off the jungle gym--you just hang there and eventually you have an orgasm. I remember vividly being in kindergarten and humping things and thinking, "Wow, this is great!" It became harder when I was an adolescent because I was a Catholic. I'd be *wracked* with guilt. Seriously. Like, "I'm burning in hell, I'm gonna burn in hell." But I couldn't stop. I remember one dawn when I was 12 really thinking I was going to be struck down that day because I woke up from an erotic dream and I couldn't help myself. I thought I was going to die that day. Then my mom gave me this book *Our Bodies, Ourselves* that said it's OK to masturbate. It had a few standard fantasies in there, and that got me back on track, and that's what started my bookshelf of fantasies. Some of them are costume dramas. You want me to tell you one?

LISA: Yeah!

JESSICA: OK. I'm the chambermaid in a medieval castle. I'm a nobody and I'm wearing a bodice that ties really tight and I have the little flouncy white shirt underneath it and I'm really well-endowed--which I'm not in real life. I can see my nipples, they're almost hanging out. The king takes me in the big stone kitchen. I can hear the queen's footsteps coming down the hall.

LISA: I love it when someone's coming down the hall.

JESSICA: Yes. He's forcing me, and I have to say, "Yes, my King, yes my King." Then I start going, [*hot voice*] "Yeah, my King." He's sort of faceless. Most of them are faceless. I can hear the footsteps and the train of the queen's dress swooshing against the floor. And I'm like, "The Queen is coming! The Queen is

coming!" And we have to both come before she walks in. But for some reason the thing that turns me on the most is the awareness of my breasts coming out of this bodice. I can feel air on them.

LISA: Can I borrow your fantasy?

JESSICA: Sure. Take your time. Be in the kitchen on your hands and knees scrubbing, and out of the corner of your eye you catch a glimpse of your cleavage. Get a little hot, you know--be there for a while before the king walks in.

LISA: Mine have gotten worse and worse over the years until now, if I let myself think whatever I want, I'll end up getting machine-gunned to death, or slowly cut into pieces. I'll try to think of something pleasant, and then as soon as I start to lose control, in comes the devil or a jackhammer. It's so violent, I wonder what's wrong with me.

JESSICA: Pleasure and pain being connected--that's totally normal.

LISA: OK, if you say so. If the king whips out a corkscrew and starts drilling into me with it, I'm just gonna let him.

JESSICA: That's right. Go with it. You got caught stealing the Royal Port and now you have to get punished.

Selections From Jessica's Bookshelf of Love

1. I'm Waitress at the Truckstop--pink polyester, a big head of cotton candy hair, a few curls falling from under the net and brushing against my cheek, smell of bacon grease and heat and here comes some nasty fellow on a motorcycle who wants some hot coffee and pie. I can feel him looking when my back is turned and he's got dirt under his nails and a cowboy face. I'm pretty much ready for him so I go to the stock room, my back against flour sacks, L'eggs around my ankles and my name tag sticking me in a nice way. Cowboy does whatever I tell him to, his hands are dry and cracked on my nipples and the flour sacks are making my back sweat. The bell on the door rings and somebody says "Hello??" in the empty diner--maybe my boss or maybe the cowboy's wife. I feel the desert heat.

2. Two trash men pick up the trash at this particular house and every time the woman who lives there comes to the door in her

underwear they go in and eat her out. She's kinky and daring and maybe even single. The trash men aren't really attractive, they're just trashmen--smelly, in stained t-shirts that just barely cover beer bellies, but with really strong, hairy arms. Sometimes I'm just sort of voyeuristic, watching this sexy skinny woman get ravished by these two dirty trashmen but today I actually am her and they are there to pick up all these leaves I've been raking and I come to the door in a t-shirt and no bra. By now they know the deal so they just come right in and lay me on the floor and get right to it.

3. Big Italian Wedding Fantasy. The opening sequence in *The Godfather* where James Caan takes the flower girl upstairs and screws her while his wife is in the kitchen or something. In my fantasy it's the groom who takes me up there and I'm some obscure relative who's just met everyone and the groom can't help himself. We do it on a pool table and I sort of weakly protest.

4. Gladiators, eunuchs, olive trees, vomitoriums and marble. This is my ancient Rome fantasy. It's a contest held at the great court of the emperor and it involves several very sexy court slaves like myself who have been paired and ordered to perform sexual acts for the courtesans. The couple who are able to reach orgasm first are allowed to survive, all others are doomed. It is (obviously) very highstakes and the pressure is almost palpable. The room is steamy with hot Italian air and panted breaths. I can feel the burn of the cool marble floor against my back. Nobody's making a sound, there is only this sort of unified deep breathing and a few of the observers are starting a slow rub against each other and I'm thrusting my hips in the air and staring wild-eyed at the ceiling fresco while I clutch at the bronzed shoulder of my partner and finally shake once and collapse with my victory.

ALEX BEHR: When I was in a bathroom stall and I had to pee I'd fantasize that the Nazis were going to come and get me if I didn't pee.

LISA: What would they do if you didn't yell at you?

ALEX: No--I think they'd probably rape me.

LISA: "Damn you, you non-peeing girl! Now you're gonna get it!"

My thoughts during masturbation, as transcribed exactly after
by Lisa Crystal Carver

***OK, that's right. Legs strained apart, butt off floor, stomach sucked in, arms back, offering up the tiny, tiny, tiny little place. Drive into, harder, screw down. Cut and blood. Agh, am I coming? God, I don't even know if that was an orgasm. Geez. I better keep my day job. Now I'm in a bad mood!

***Oh, this is fine. A nice start. I have a good foreboding. I hope people don't think I'm a pervert masturbating all the time. Ooh, I'll have to remember that move in case I ever go all the way with a lady. I bet if I'd had sex with Margaux Hemingway she'd still be alive today. 'Cause I



Margaux Hemingway's corpse

would've given her such unbelievable pleasure she would have lost all her depression. What if I found her before that guy did? He said she was badly decomposed. Would her body be stiff? Or bloated. How long before it'd be rotted enough to have chunks rub off? Soft and mushy. She was startlingly ugly anyway, even when she was alive. Did she put on makeup before she took the pills? Chunks of decomposing flesh crumbling under my pelvis, makeup sweated in death throes into lines of color running down her face and neck. Oh, this is so wonderful. I can't believe I get to do this any time I want! I am so glad I'm a human and not some animal who just ruts without refinement. Oh, stop, I can make this last if I want. Oh, wonderful, wonderful. Thank you, God, for making me human. Oh, wow. Oh, great. Margaux Hemingway's corpse. I'm so happy--oh, oh, oh. Oh, wow. OK, I'll let myself come now. Oh! Oh! OH! Oh, God,

thank you! Oh, I can't believe it's so long. Oh, oh. This is forever. Oh my God, ah.

LISA: What is your favorite masturbation fantasy?

DAVID TIBET: None. Maybe I used to have one.... When I'd look at porn magazines I'd cry rather than become aroused.

LISA: Really?

TIBET: I don't mean weep in a pathetic sense, but tears would come to my eyes.

PHIL MILSTEIN: Uh, hello?

LISA: This is Lisa. Are you sleeping?

PHIL: Uh...yeah.

LISA: Then this is a good time to ask you: What are your sexual fantasies?

PHIL: They're so normal and straightforward they're bland.

LISA: Like, you have sex with someone?

PHIL: Yeah. Even the sex and what they look like is so conventional.

LISA: I always ask men that and they're always like that. The women are the sick-o's.

PHIL: Well, I knew that. I'm going back to sleep now.

ADAM PARFREY: Gee, I don't have one anymore. I used to have one about the actress Gena Rowlands. I met her at a New Year's Eve party my parents took me to when I was five years old. She was the first person I saw as being a woman and I fell in love immediately and I've been fixated on her ever since. It was like I was looking through a camera lens with Vaseline on it to make her the most beautiful woman I've ever seen.

LISA: What happens in your fantasy?

ADAM: Go to a party and have sex.

LISA: Did you ever tell her your feelings?

ADAM: Oh gee whiz, I wouldn't tell her such a thing. The last time I saw her was at my father's funeral twelve years ago. I think it would have disturbed her to find out her friend's son had been obsessed with her all his life.

JIM GOAD: There has to be some kind of dirtiness or flaw. Like a broken nose or a missing tooth. I realize Christie Brinkley should strike my brain pan, but no. Symmetry and wholesomeness seem de-sexed to me, like Sea Breeze. When I was a teenager, I'd always jerk off to Laverne from *Laverne & Shirley*. They have to be carrying some kind of baggage. Or white women who look like Negroes. There has to be some sign of abuse or trauma. It

might go back to my British ancestry. Brits need being paddled, or they need some kind of naughtiness.

LISA: How do you know that?

JIM: How *do* I know that?

Melissa Jasper's Masturbation Diary

Episode 1: I'm trying desperately to read, but for some reason I feel I should be getting Robert's attention. I guess I'm feeling so rejected--in favor of an 8-track--that I've decided it's strong enough to be a sexual craving.

I'm trying to decide whether to read or masturbate. I, pathetically, only want to masturbate if I'm sure that Robert will walk in on me. I decide to go ahead and have an orgasm. I'm not sure I thought of anything but the rhythm, which always generates one quick image: a black world and a thin blue line of a hill and me, just an iridescent stick figure, methodically walking up the hill, then finally jumping off its end.

I think I said the word "yes" 100 times in a row. As I'm drifting off of my orgasm, I'm running my fingers through Madonna's hair. It is very blonde, and too gelled for me to want to continue to touch it. I'm saddened by how short she is, and by how annoying it is to spend a life being bodyguarded. I angrily end my fantasy with Madonna when I remember how I had supposedly lured her into being my potential (if the bodyguard would only leave us alone for a while!) lover--by writing her a supremely witty and perceptive letter. I've discovered that this is more an egotistical fantasy than a purely sexual one.

I'm glad I've already come, since my arrogance has just made me embarrassed to be naked.

Episode 2: Lisa will kill me. She [called and] asked if my masturbation chronicle had begun, and I was instantly inside my underwear. You start off running two fingers between your clit and lips, just to clean the white stuff out, then you end up flicking at your clit a bit, then moments later you are straining to continue on with your conversation without panting.

(I masturbated while on the phone with my mother once, partly out of boredom, partly out of the thrill of being shocking. It was the hardest orgasm I've ever tried to have. I actually can't remember if it was great, or a bit



A Jessica Hundley masturbation fantasy

sabotaged, because of her voice droning on. All I remember was that I was breathing through flared nostrils and was covered in sweat.)

So I'm on the floor in the dining room, feet in the air, and the first wave of pleasure I get comes from the thought of a fuzzy lavender sweater and then bunches of white lilies. I get off the phone with Lisa and run for the stairwell. I have one leg cocked over the banister and can barely see a line of yellow light through a parted curtain. When I envision a huge zipper closing the curtain, I think of it also closing my vagina, and am instantly on the verge of orgasm. As I come, the oddest thing comes to mind--a scrubbing bubble from a 1970s television advertisement. He just sadly, slowly floats by me.

Episode 3: I am walking from far away, maybe from England, through years of hills and dirt roads. My destination becomes apparent as I am about to come: a little hut squarely in the middle of Nevada. It is unpainted and I find this exciting.

Finally, I am inside of it and everything is white and bare, except for a single wooden bookcase. As I approach it, it is empty, empty, empty. My orgasm, however, is signified by the heavy thud of a large leather book springing out of the top shelf.

Pensees

by Jessica Hundley

I said something last night that I think is somewhat disturbing. I was grabbing my boyfriend's ass really tight in a sort of

violent desperate way and said, "God, I love your ass so much I'd like to carve off each buttock, place them in a roasting pan and bake them in the oven until the skin is golden brown and the juice runs clear. Then I'd take a knife and fork and gobble you up." Although I was slightly exaggerating, I was honest in my desire to have those buttocks somehow, to make them completely my own. To eat someone, to tear off pieces of their flesh with your teeth, to chew and swallow and have them inside of you, churning in your belly--something about that seems incredibly passionate and erotic. I was watching one of those National Geographic specials "Laws of the Jungle" or "The Mighty Hunters" and all those lions ripping apart wildebeasts and tigers chewing on deer, it all seemed like such an orgiastic display, this ultimate union, pleasure and pain and sensual satiation. Sex and eating are the two great sensual decadences, but what about eating someone you're having sex with? It all stems from the very thin line between desire and violence. The manifestation of desire as a physical need to touch and to have. There's the desire one feels toward the beautiful: sunsets, grand canyons, the ocean. Seeing these things makes the heart ache with this longing: you want some sort of union with these things, you want to be completely encompassed by them. Then there is the physical muscle tight feel brought on by the sight of infants, kittens and teddy bears. You just want to hug them so tight they'll pop, or somehow meld into your own skin. Squeeze them so hard they become

part of you. Which brings me back to last night. My boyfriend's ass drives me crazy. It's so perfect somehow, so round and smooth and I WANT IT with a gritted teeth sort of want. This pained desire is usually post-sex, under the sheets, warm, smooth, and it's stronger than sex in some ways, more violent and more desperate. In masturbation, that feeling is absent. You don't desire yourself with ferocity. You don't feel the need to rip off a thigh muscle with strong sharp teeth, I think because one belongs so entirely to oneself. One has no need to become part of oneself. One is oneself.

Certain periods in history turn me on.

by Jessica

Pre-revolution France: powdered wigs and Spanish pirates and fake beauty marks on white skin. Red cheeks and heaving bosoms, candlelight and crystal mirrors, lace cuffs, roast pigs, oiled wood and gilt. Parasols in the gardens, coquettishness, duels, velvet breeches, sweat and horses' flanks, leather and woodsmoke, gunpowder, wedding cake hair, hoop skirts and the hard biting sound of a harpsichord.

The Romantics: empire waists that tighten just below the breast, ribbons, mysticism, doric columns and vaulted arches, bloomers, carriages, picnics, the moors and heather. Poetry and feather pens, shrubby mazes, fabric that floated and free love.

Victorian: houses with stairways you discover, then forget. Victorian gardens too, and daguerreotypes, flowers and fruit and bustles and handlebar mustacheos and cigar



*beaded dresses and
hard smart women*

smoke and dark wood, oriental carpets, glass hothouses, pianos and pinafores, hoops and sticks and little girl ghosts. Cameo brooches in the hollow of the neck and cowboys and silver coins and Colt 45s, gold mines and cold saloons and stagecoaches, showdowns and sweat salted hats.

The Roaring Twenties and The Depression Thirties: beaded dresses and hard smart women and lesbianism and bobbed hair. In Paris and New York City, the smell of books and Princeton-Yale boys, the flicker light of silent film, ex-patriotism, the last of the real rich/the eccentric rich, the Hamptons and the Riviera, oilcloth, cabbage, Communism, bad teeth and delicately penciled eyebrows, sexy hard art

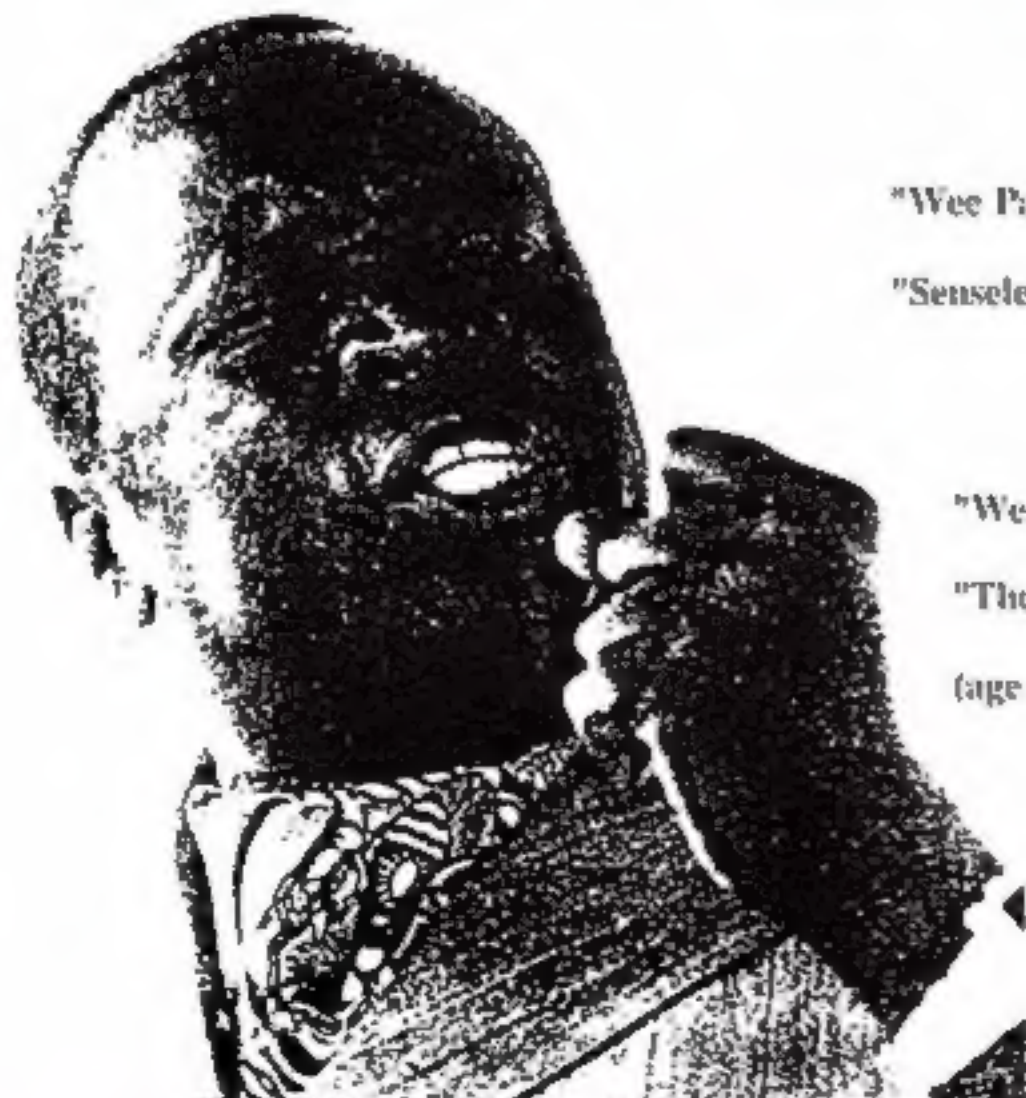
deco curves, Harlem, immigrant neighborhoods, taxi dancers, bootleggers and the way everything was a little dirty and animal and desperate.

The same thoughts always turn me on.

by Lisa

Bayonets shoved up me, sharp and hungry teeth gnashing me, people getting tortured loudly and mercilessly in the next room, me hanging upside down in burlap bag (sometimes getting hit with sticks or cut into little pieces while in bag), getting stabbed, getting kicked, bloody holes shot through my body, the bathtub monster coming out of the faucet or drain and burrowing horribly between my legs, getting slapped in the face over and over, getting caught masturbating. A really good one is I switch back and forth between being the 13-year-old and the step-father. He's/I'm on a ladder and she/I hand(s) a hammer to him/me, rubbing her/my rudely over-developed breasts against my/his leg while doing so. He/I make her/me lie down and do(es) stuff to her/me and won't continue until she/I beg(s) for it. (While audacious, she's/I'm still shy in the end, and it's so hard to admit out loud to wanting it.) He hooks himself/I hook myself to a pulley on the ceiling and fly into the very wet girl/myself. Whipped back, wind knocked out of him/me upon each slam into the ceiling, swing forward with aerodynamic force straight into the thickly saucy hole...it's divine. She's/I'm still dressed: fuzzy short-sleeved sweater and skirt up over stomach, thigh-high tights.

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AEROBICS

When you're a kid, there's plenty of activities where a bunch of females synchronize their fairly bare bodies: cheerleading, acrobatics, dance. The more adventuresome among us even did our kissing--or more!--lined up in a row with four or five boys who didn't know why we didn't want to be in a room alone to do this, but they weren't about to question our motives. When you grow up, you're supposed to exert your independent will all the time, and think all the time, and have sex all alone with one other person (who's probably male), and no one is telling you and a roomful of other eager females exactly when to bend, hop and breathe. Except in aerobics. Aerobics is the last bastion in adult life where your legs are allowed to become merely one mindless set among dozens of lady-legs in the mirror-covered walls, not expressing one's self--only contributing to the beauty of mass movement. The beat thumps, sweat burgeons out in perfect circles 'round a dozen purple lycra ensconced crotches, and a chorus of heaved sighs builds to a roar.

LISA: Did you ever--

RACHEL JOHNSON: *Never!*

LISA: Did you ever do aerobics?

RACHEL: Yeah! I mean, wasn't that what you and me and Chris Sakey used to do to the Jane Fonda tape?

LISA: Yeah, but I couldn't really remember it so I was hoping you would. Did we wear special clothes?

RACHEL: Yeah--we were in our undies, which made Chris Sakey uncomfortable.

LISA: Jane Fonda had a special quality. I really felt like I couldn't displease her, like she could actually see us from the tape.

RACHEL: We'd yell. We'd say, "No more, Jane!"--but she wanted more.

LISA: I go to classes now and it's so fun. You learn all these steps and I feel so proud when I can do like eight different steps in a row. "Grapevine right! Threepeat Hamstring and Squat!" The other ladies are mean to me though. They're jealous 'cause I'm limber. But I didn't ask to be limber! I mean, we all have qualities--they have big boobs, and you don't hear me complaining about that!

RACHEL: I know--you're a single mom and you can't find your way to the store or remember anything; it's not like you don't deserve to at least be limber!

LISA: I know! Why do people have to be so mean? I *root* for the other aerobics people. I am not a small person and I wish others would follow my example!

RACHEL: Wow!--maybe you should be the instructor.

LISA: I should.

DAME DARCY: I hate aerobics. I hate aerobics so bad. I think it's public humiliation and torture to make me do aerobics. Someone tells you what to do and then you're just kicking your arms and legs around like a little puppet doll. Like a crazy robot. And everyone's supposed to be so peppy. Like, "Hooray! You're going to make it!" I hate aerobics!

LISA: I can see that you feel strongly about this

DARCY: I don't exercise. I let the masses go do what they feel like. I totally love people, I love crowds, but there's no one at all similar to me. I have anemia and I just lay around the house in my Victorian shifts and eat a lot of sugar, a lot of cookies, until finally the sun goes down and I feel a little better and I go out until five in the morning.

JAINA DAVIS: I was looking at some body-building magazine, and the cover of this one magazine--almost every blurb on the cover was a vicious attack on aerobics: "Body Building: Better Than Aerobics"; "Aerobics: The Big Lie." You know, it was all about how aerobics sucks and you gotta come to body building because that's where it's at. I never knew that these two forces were enemies. I didn't realize it was *either* aerobics *or* body building and you have to choose.

PAGAN KENNEDY: I'll do the aerobics, but I refuse to clap or to yell "woo woo." That's my own personal, moral stand. I joined a gym thinking I would do macho things like weightlifting, but it gets boring to lift weights. So I'd go do the boy things but find myself weirdly attracted to the aerobics and step classes. And then I started doing them. When you're an at-home freelance writer, it is heaven to go to aerobics class and have some in-shape 25-year-old screaming at you and have the peer

pressure to do all these stupid moves--because for a whole hour you don't have to think. You can just be commanded around by somebody, which for me is bliss.

LISA: Is that sexual for you?

PAGAN: Oh no--it's the opposite of sexualness. It's becoming a pure automaton. It's a frightening force. It got out of control. I really feel it's the same thing that attracts people to fascism--relax, turn off your brain.

LISA: It's the female fascism. We don't want to be ordered to kill--we want to be ordered to dance. I feel the same thing you do, except for me it is sexual, and I go "woo woo."

PAGAN: My resistance of the fascism is that I won't clap or yell "woo woo." *

LISA: Do people glare at you for being a party pooper?

PAGAN: I feel the peer pressure, but I proudly don't clap or say "woo woo," and I don't care what they think.

LISA: Don't you think not clapping is like not going to the prom--you're saying "fuck you" to the popular people, but in the end you're the one who loses out on the fun?

PAGAN: You know, I really don't think it would make my life richer to yell "woo woo."

LISA: I do.

*Note: this is the opposite of *Swing Kids*, where their total resistance to the Nazis was to clap and yell "woo woo"!

PHIL MILSTEIN: I watched an aerobics class once. It was nothing like on TV. Everyone was wheezing, all out of rhythm, not generally attractive, sweaty, stinky, and cheating like crazy. They were



all over the place with their so-called rhythm.

LISA: This isn't very manly of you--you're supposed to get excited by sweating, moving females.

PHIL: They were not enticing women to begin with. Not hot, lithe, young girls/potential starlets like on TV. I was expecting hot spandex, but they were covering everything up with loose, flabby gym clothes that were parallel to their loose, flabby skin. *Peep* was what I was trying to do. And I found it was nothing to peep at. I wanted *precision*. I wanted to see dictatorial charisma and perfect obedience. Aerobics is about obedience. Why do people need a class to do this--why can't they do it at home? And if they do do it alone, why do they need to follow a video? It's because of lack of self-discipline. They need this communal thing with a leader. But what I saw was a superficial play at obedience. In actuality, it's like school, where the students are paying no attention to the teacher, or going to the bathroom to sneak a cigarette. Like most things in life you imagine being glamorous, it turns out the reality is grotesque.

LISA: Do you have an opinion on aerobics?

CHRIS SHERIDEN: I was doing aerobics to the TV when you called, actually. In my underwear.

LISA: Wow--I never would've suspected you of liking it.

CHRIS: It's a bunch of women moving around--you gotta like it. But it's kind of boring 'cause it's in a room. Everything gets done inside now. People just stay in their room all the time. It's dangerous. In Japan and Canada they have these malls with swimming pools and hotels and movie theaters, so you could just stay inside for a week--and eventually, forever. It's leading toward divorce from the natural life and insularization of the individual, and physical contact will be verboten. Everybody's gonna start telecommuting--that's what you're doing with *Rollerderby* now. It has some good points except that

when the electricity goes away, society will collapse completely.

LISA: Could you lead this back to aerobics?

CHRIS: It's all about loss of regional diversity--you could be doing it in Albuquerque or in Dover, but you're doing the same aerobics without diversity and complexities. You're all watching the same TV show. Everyone's doing aerobics in their house. So we can eat more fat and telecommute. It's all about fat!



JESSICA HUNDLEY: I worked at a gym and James Taylor came in one day and reserved the aerobics room. He did step aerobics for my entire shift (three hours), wearing spandex shorts and a half-shirt. He's over six feet tall and about 100 pounds. I felt it was a real insight into his personality--how tight-assed and disciplined he must be...

and how much time he has on his hands. I kept imagining him doing it to his own songs. It was sort of sad--a desperate grasp at youth. You could see he wanted to live forever...step his way through eternity.

KERRY McLAUGHLIN: The titles are always good, like "100% Turbo Power" or "Jammin' Cardio Craze." They'd always have one paunchy guy who'd sneak in the back and was embarrassed to be there.

LISA: How do you feel about the fashions?

KERRY: I'm all for 'em. Especially the thong over the leotard.

LISA: Oh, I can't take that. I just wanna pull it out of their crack the whole time.

KERRY: But it gets your attention, see?

LISA: Yeah--like trying to have a conversation when there's a piece of floss hanging between someone's front teeth.

JENNY SHEARS: With sweats you can look sexy with a touch of the Flashdance mystique, but the wrong fit can just make you look like a professor's wife circa 1980.

LISA: How do you feel about thongs?

JENNY: I don't think that bisecting your ass perpendicularly with a thin line of cloth flatters the shape. When I see someone in one of those, I suddenly feel as if I need to choose one side of her butt over

the other. Her ass is suddenly an either/or.

ALEX BEHR: Aerobics was better than yoga in that no one farted...that I noticed.

LISA: People actually farted during yoga?

ALEX: Yeah. You had to light candles because people were farting all around you. The teacher put little votive candles down.

LISA: Surely you were not one of those farting

ALEX: I don't remember. I seem to remember that it was other people's problem, not mine.

LISA: I have to ask you about masturbation, aerobics and soap operas

DEBBIE GOAD: A lot of chicks at work followed the soaps. Girls who go to hairdressers and have their nails done would enjoy it. It's not my taste. It's fake.

LISA: You don't like the soap opera makeup?

DEBBIE: Fake. I'm not into that shit

LISA: Do you wear any?

DEBBIE: Barely any. I think everyone should shave their heads and walk around like cavemen.

LISA: Any opinion on aerobics?

DEBBIE: I don't exercise. It isn't my taste. I couldn't be in a line doing exercises.

LISA: You don't feel the call of the pack.

DEBBIE: Yeah--I can't get into group activities. I'm a loner. I stay away from the herd. I don't even get phone calls.

LISA: How about masturbation--that's not very herd-y. You're not gonna be line-masturbating.

DEBBIE: There's nothing wrong with masturbation.

LISA: Do you have a favorite fantasy?

DEBBIE: I'm not sure I want to go into this.

LISA: I'll tell you mine.

DEBBIE: Well, OK. I have a sick fantasy. Being a Jew, my favorite fantasy is being fucked by a Nazi.

LISA: Is there a particular setting? Does this happen in Germany, or are you in America in the present day? What are the details?

DEBBIE: I don't even want...you've...

LISA: I've overwhelmed you with my questions. I've taken you by storm. Just like those stormtroopers. Are you getting excited?

DEBBIE: [silence]

LISA: Does Jim go along with it?

DEBBIE: Oh sure. He just shaved his head. Don't print that!

Obsession

by Jenny Shears

I'm not sure quite how it started. I was living in Scotland and spent most of my nights alone. At first I just wanted to get in shape or shed a few pounds. Soon my life would be ruled by exercise. I became a workoutaholic.

October 7, 1988

Dear Diary,

I went to my 1st aerobics class today. Don't laugh. I'm the only high school student there. I don't know if I'm going to like this stuff. It's so embarrassing. I would just die if anyone saw me. I mean, there are other people in the class, but they are all military wives. I am so out of shape. I'm going to try to go again on Wednesday, though I am sore already. Maybe I can get rid of all this fat on my stomach and thighs. I'm ready to try anything. The class is pretty boring, leg lifts etc., and the music SUCKS--Debbie Gibson's "The Locomotion" will be playing in my personal hell--but the instructor knows how to exercise correctly. I would never know how to work my inner thigh.

Slowly, my endurance increased. Within a month, I could go through the entire class without stopping. I was losing fat and replacing it with muscle. Soon aerobicising three times a week was not enough. My small success just made me crave even bigger results. I added two days of running to my schedule. Soon this too was not enough, and I started dieting and lifting weights. I read in a magazine that the more muscle you have, the more calories your body burns doing anything. By 1989, my shins were so shot that I had to take aspirin every day when I woke up and again before my aerobics class. Walking up stairs was agony. Walking in general was uncomfortable, but I didn't care and kept up my rigorous pace. I even occasionally exercised on the Stairmaster after an aerobics class. I was still partying and eating badly and generally abusing my body; grueling early morning aerobic classes just added to the mix.

I felt that my exercising was a complete anomaly in my image, which was a non-sporty nightowl, black clothes, artistic.... But once I started, it became really important to me. It became a nightmare. If I skipped an aerobic class or didn't go running on the scheduled days, or even didn't work hard enough in the class, I would be riddled with guilt. The guilt was worse than the agony. I always had this dream of not having any sort of fat on my stomach. I'd pinch it all the time to see how I was doing. All day long I'd obsess about my portions and not eating fat until I'd break down and eat every single fattening thing in the house. I'd even eat Moon Pies, and I don't even like them.

January 18, 1990

Dear Diary,

I am so hung over. Saturday night somehow turned into another drunken debacle, even after I swore that morning that I'd never drink again. So here it is Sunday and I feel like shit again and I really should go work out. I went down to the dining hall and ate two bowls of Crackin Oat Bran. Now I've got that on top of all the calories from alcohol. Ugh. I really should go to the gym though.

Yuck. I don't want to. It's full of jocks on the weekend and it stinks in there. I'll feel even worse if I don't go. God, I feel terrible. It will hurt to work out and it will be so boring. I hate the stationary bikes. I should really go though. My head hurts so badly and I'm so bloated from breakfast. OK, I'm going.

It started out as a game of control: "I want to eat that, but I am stronger than my desires" and ended up as fear: "If I eat this one thing, or don't go to one exercise

class, I'll never have control again." And I was right! One day I didn't exercise, and it was all over--no exercising at all, and no worrying at all about what I eat. And my weight has stayed the same. Recently I attended a few aerobic classes, but they just made me want to smoke. I would love to exercise casually, but I don't believe that's possible for me. I've been thinking of taking up tennis, but then I'd probably end up stringing a net across my room and practicing all the time. I don't go to school and I don't have a job anymore, so I could practice 22 hours a day and get so exhausted and dehydrated I'd get caught in the net after one extra-exuberant backhand and die of auto-tennis-asphyxiation. And then all my nightowl-in-black friends would discover my muscular, terry cloth-headbanded corpse with one arm much larger than the other: my secret life revealed.

Making a Guy Want You By Making Him Want To Eat You

by Darby

The other night I went for a long drive to a party with my friend and a few of his guy friends. I knew I didn't have the patience or desire to blow my charms, my attention or my energy on the game of making them want me. I didn't want them to want me particularly, but the need females have for boys to want them is beyond want, beyond need, way beyond inclination. It's a perverse fatal disease, entangled within the first thought a woman has in the day to the nightmare that keeps her up at night. We haven't



photo by Mark Kimball 1996

what extent we are doomed.

When I got into the car the boys were confused. We were going to a Hawaiian Hanukkah party and I was wearing coconut foot creme all over my body with spritzes of real vanilla on top. And just a touch of mango. The car-bound boys were like stray dogs sniffing out something left uneaten in a nearby garbage can. They looked about to see if we'd passed something which might explain the aroma. Finally one admitted it was making him hungry. *That was it.* I didn't just want men attracted to me, desirous of me. No matter how much they claim their undying love, ultimately it's *food, air and water* that they will always need more. If I put my energy into fitting myself into one of those categories, instead of into being merely lovable, it will certainly be a more fruitful endeavor.

I'm not saying these men were falling all over me. But if that's what I wanted, the smells would have been arsenal to back up my more usual womanly charms. Let the individual of your choice get close enough to breathe you in, but don't let him take a bite. Remember: when people are starving they are weak and desperate. That's your advantage. Always

keep the boy hungry and feed him at intervals when his desires are at their peak. Soon the scent of food will blend into the scent of you and he will get confused. He won't know what he craves more: a hamburger, or the hot fudge sundae that you are to him. Keep that fridge of yours full and *never* give the source.

Tasty Body Eating Connections



***When a man fucks you, you want him to *plow you like a farmer, sow his seed:* shove it up as far as possible, far enough to *fill your belly--* but it never quite makes it.

***After a boy *eats you out,* he lifts up his head from the sloppy plate o' girl and he's got her dripping down his chin and her hair in his teeth. He looks like he just ate cake with his hands tied behind his

back.

***The dinner date is a necessary stage of early dating: you can't be sure you're gonna get any, so at least you've both got something in your stomach, which makes you less frustrated

***The slightly gross term suck face was made even more gross by a friend of mine who was so disgusted by a friend's public make-out sessions that he suggested the

guy just suck on her nose if he loved her so much. "Why not, what's the difference?" It's true--especially considering we all enjoyed the delicacy of our own boogers before we learned that this is socially tasteless.

***Tits are melons; young budding girls are ripened peaches, or just ripe. "Got milk?" is a subliminal come-on line for a man wanting to suckle the breast of his mother, or any woman he can get to replace her.

***Virgins have cherries; older girl's have something that turns more fishy. Even a very fishy twat makes a hungry man's head spin if he can smell that food smell.

Silly Salon Names

We don't know why people in the business of cutting hair seem to be so singularly given over to choosing madcap monikers for their salons, we just know that they are. Here, a few examples from a single American city, Denver.

A Head of Our Time

Alley Cuts

American Hairitage Salon

Aristacut Hair Designs

Ask Twink A Color & Style

Benny's Sophisti-cut Hair & Nail Salon

The Best Little Hair House in Denver

Cream of The Crop

Curl Up and Dye

Cuttin' Up Hair Inc.

Dave's Hair A Tage

Hair and Now

Hair-O-Scope

The Hair-Porte Ltd.

Hair We R

Hairphenalia

The Head Honchos

The "Locks" Smith

Numerical Hair

O'Hairs Styling Salon

Scissorsella

The Shair Croppers

Sir Louis' Clip Joint

Syndicut

Washington Headlines

Whata Clip Joint

The Names Project

We are creating a national registry of silly salon names. Please scour the yellow pages in your own town and send us the names of barber shops and beauty salons that seem to be likely candidates to add to our list. When the list is complete the names will be inscribed on a huge marble cube and donated to the Smithsonian Institute as an example of this uniquely American folk custom, or perhaps installed next to the Viet Nam War Memorial on the wall in Washington, D.C. Your cooperation is appreciated.

—contributed by Boyd Rice



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SOAPS

At Planet Fitness, this woman on the treadmill next to mine apologetically turned the overhanging TV to *Days of our Lives*, and boy was I shocked! I thought I had a problem with insomnia--every single character on that show wakes up screaming in the middle of the night with a premonition that someone is about to be murdered. And everyone has on a ton of makeup. And they're all foreigners. Their houses do not contain the kind of things mine does: a butterfly display, pictures of the kid, a table, a TV. No, all these people need is a bed, a harpsichord, and a telescope. What do they all have a harpsichord for? I never see anyone playing it. There are these moments of tension--like when the telephone rings and the characters look from one to another and ominous music rises and no one wants to answer it. It's like they've been waiting, right there, all their lives, for this awful moment to arrive. It's just the telephone! What are all those people doing standing around in the room together in the middle of the day anyway? Shouldn't they be at work or something? Then this woman, in some sort of dreadful torture cavern, with scars and burn marks covering her face and neck, points a gun at an aging foreigner with obvious sex appeal and says, "God help me...I...still...love...you." BOOM! She killed him and herself, because the gun blast blew up some combustible powder or something. I knew exactly how she felt

VICKY WHEELER: They're contagious. There's some weird subliminal things going on, 'cause they have the same effect on adults that Barney has on little kids. Even though I don't know any of the story lines, if I accidentally turn on a soap opera, I'll get sucked in and watch the whole hour!

LISA: What do you suppose it is that sucks people in?

VICKY: [in a rushed whisper] Because they all talk in a really rushed whisper voice!

LISA: I wish my real life was like that: I say something dramatic and my conversation partner is floored and we eyeball each other silently for a whole minute until eventually there's a slow fadeout.

VICKY: Or it's a freeze-frame, but it's not a real

Richard (Corey Page) and Zoey (Joni Allen) were falling in love until they discovered they were brother and sister.

camera freeze-frame--they're all really standing like that. My mother watched *The Guiding Light* when I was a kid and I started watching it for a while after I had Henry, and my mother was telling me the life history of all these people who were *still on*, and all the millions of people they'd been married to and all their millions of kids.

LISA: It's a rich dynasty. A flourishing and neverending story. A lot happens!

VICKY: They can never figure out their sense of time--somebody'll have a kid, and then the next year it's a teenager. Either that or a kid will be three years old *forever*.

LISA: The kids are really ugly too. Out of all the child actors they must be able to choose from, why do they pick these ones who look like little animals?

VICKY: The adults all wear so much makeup they look like they're made up for the theater. I guess that's because there's a lot of older women watching that don't have very good eyesight. Or they watch from across the room while they're ironing their clothes.

ADAM PARFREY: I'd go to a coffee shop where one would be on, and I'd watch the people watching it. It's fascinating. People would be very absorbed, licking their lips.

RACHEL JOHNSON: I used to watch the one with the black guy with dreadlocks and a bunch of drunken older ladies and three sisters and one rapist. You think you're just going to watch it for five minutes, then

you say, "Ohhh! What's gonna happen?" and you have to watch it the next day too.

JAINA DAVIS: Some of these soaps have been going on since before we were born. It's passing from generation to generation this legend, this mythology.

LISA: They have really bad characters that don't get punished. That's something that separates them from anything else on TV

or in the movies or books. Everything just goes on. There's never



phone ring

a wedding and then happily-ever-after. It's happy for a while, and then something happens, just like in real life. For that reason, soap operas are the only realistic form of entertainment.

JAINA: There is a point where soap operas begin, but they never end. It's the eternal struggles of life that never end: there's always the love struggle, the evil boss struggle, and the Is-that-person-dead-or-just-missing struggle. I can relate to all of this. We have all lived this.

LISA: I know. I know you have a brother actually missing/ maybe dead in Alaska, but for *everyone* there's the question of: Is that person really dead or does their soul linger in heaven or as a ghost or just a memory tormenting me and affecting my behavior? Soap operas just present things a little more literally. Like the abduction and torture struggle--that hasn't actually happened to many people in real life, but everyone's had their heart abducted and tortured at least once.

JAINA: There's not one person on earth who cannot relate to a soap opera. I don't care if they're living out in the outback of Australia and have never seen a car in their life: they can relate to these struggles. The soap operas understand. More than your therapist, more than your mother--they understand. They are ancient and eternal; they've seen it all.

LISA: Wow!

JESSICA HUNDLEY: When I was ten or eleven I started watching *General Hospital*. Like most of my peers, I became involved in the Luke and Laura saga. I was titillated. I didn't really know what rape was, but I knew their relationship was forbidden because my parents were so disdainful of it. That whetted my appetite.

LISA: It changed my life. Previous to that, I thought that there were things you do and things you just don't do--one of those being if somebody rapes you, you don't marry him. When Laura married Luke it occurred to me: you don't have to do what you're supposed to. And I've been not doing it ever since! And look at the trouble I'm in now!

during which Lucky, battled a gambling problem and almost lost his baby sister, Lulu, to aplastic anemia.



monster children

LISA: What would you say are the main themes of soaps?

ALEX BEHR: AIDS...kidnapping...arson.

LISA: How would you describe the interior decorating?

ALEX: The women who want to be seduced a lot, they have kind of puffy couches.

LISA: And the men are such slaves to their senses. They see that puffy couch, they can't resist falling into it, even if they just got married. There's a lot of animal passion.

ALEX: And a lot of animal prints.

LISA: And ferns! In the hospital there's ferns, in the living room there's ferns, in the log cabin where the woman's being held for ransom there's ferns.

PAGAN KENNEDY: The lighting is very poor--that weird video lighting. It doesn't make people look good at all. It's like this dank, fluorescent-lit, depressing world.

LISA: It's not just the lighting. There's this soap look. Even if you're flipping through a magazine and there's a picture of five people at an AIDS benefit, you'll be able to pick out which ones are soap actors.

PAGAN: They're more made up.

LISA: Yes, but in a particular way--an orangey-brownish-crimson thing.

PAGAN: Yeah, yeah!

MELISSA JASPER: I'm generally repulsed by all the people. Um...I can say *all*, yes.

LISA: I too am repulsed, and yet I can't keep my eyes off them.

MELISSA: Yes. It has something to do with the timing. The amazing space between each sentence adds to all the drama. I'm always fascinated with how long it takes people to say things on soap operas--I guess that's the hook for me.



soap opera torture cavern

KERRY MCLAUGHLIN: I love 'em. The stars...their appearance is in a whole world in itself. Why do they coif them totally different and put their makeup on totally different from the rest of the world? It's like a romance novel come to life

LISA: What would you say is the main theme?

KERRY: Betrayal

LISA: Do soap opera stars in England wear a lot of makeup?

DAVID TIBET: No, I think as a rule not. Ours are more to do with the working class, set in cheap housing the government sets up in the community--like your Section 8. The warm-hearted tart who serves at the local bar would [wear makeup]. She'd be the flirty one.

PHIL MILSTEIN: It's fun to just kind of glance around from one to the next. I like the fact that they're doing a whole drama every single day with virtually no budget. There's not a whole lot of quality control. I've seen coughing fits or people blow their lines. They've gotten a whole lot more competitive in the last few years, so they're adding supernatural stuff and location shots or pseudo location shots. But basically the plot revolves around the same things it always has: marital infidelity, drunkenness. It's like Country and Western music

LISA: People hovering between life and death--that's another big theme. I hate the hospital scenes. They're *so slow*.

PHIL: Aren't they all slow?

LISA: Yeah, but in the living room there's conflict. People say horrible things to each other. In the hospital they just let their tears glint forever and ever. And the sick people take so long to get a sentence out. The jacuzzi scenes are just as bad. The one person's hand creeps *so slowly* up the other person's arm--with beads of jacuzzi water glinting--until my own skin starts to crawl and I want to scream, "Get out of that jacuzzi!"

LISA: I called to ask you about *The Young and the Restless*.

TOM ARDOLINO: I was just watching that!

LISA: Should I call you back?

TOM: No, it's on tape. It's Friday's show 'cause I wasn't home. You watch it?

LISA: Well, I don't really watch any of them--it's more like a feeling.

TOM: Yeah, it's all I care about. It's the greatest. It's got everything. It can be very sad. It can be really funny. It's got its boring spots you gotta put up with once in a while but that's all right.

LISA: But what about the makeup?

TOM: What do you mean?

LISA: The makeup seems to disturb people.



insomniac

LISA: Yeah! Of course it ended up all just being a daydream.

TOM: Deanna Love mentioned that [Victor] liked doing that scene. [wheezes]

LISA: Do you watch any other shows?

TOM: *Bold and the Beautiful* comes on right after. There's this one guy on there named Ridge. He has the weirdest acting style. It's like--not too good.

LISA: He has a problem with his jaw. [Tom wheezes] That's his acting style--talking around that jaw.



Ridge's chin

TOM: He'll say, "CAWner!" [for Conner]. The acting, the jaw--he just cracks me up.

LISA: *Bold and the Beautiful* put about five dollars into each set design.

TOM: You can kind of go with it. The sets can be entertaining, like Ridge.

LISA: I guess. I'm not there to feel ironic. I'm there to be captivated.

TOM: I'll tell you though, going to that convention is something else. You go into this room and all the stars of the show are there, just walking around. It's so crazy to all of a sudden see these people that you see every day so you feel like you kind of know them, and they're all there, and you're there with them. Oh there's Miguel, the servant. It's sick! It's the weirdest thrill. Oh there's Nicki. Oh there's Cricket. It's so nuts

It's real all of a sudden, and I loved it. Every year I get my picture taken with Victor. I think they might think I'm a nut, especially Victor, who I'd like to get a nice picture with. Every time he says, "OK, OK, take the picture." And he has this look on his face in the picture and you can tell what he's thinking.

LISA: Do you have any fantasies of things

you'd like to happen--

TOM: Oh, no! No.

LISA: I don't mean have sex

TOM: Oh it'd be great to hang out with Victor. Sure.

Everyone would want to hang out with Victor.

LISA: What do your friends think of your habit?

TOM: They accept it. They know it comes on at a certain time every day and I gotta watch it if we're out somewhere.

LISA: What was your most emotional moment watching *Young and the Restless*?

TOM: Well, there's been a bunch. I think when Victor came back after everyone thought he died.

Some Dialogue

ERIKA: Don't push yourself. You were in a drug-induced trance for a year.

SKYE: Thanks to a fiend I'm stuck in Pine Valley for the rest of my pathetic existence while he lives the high life out there God knows where. I should've slit his throat while I had the chance and watched his life drain

PUFFY ITALIAN IN WHEELCHAIR: Get out, you kidnapper.

WASHED-OUT BLONDE: No.

ITALIAN: I said get out!

BLONDE: I've just as much right to be here as you. You get out. Or what's the matter...*can't walk?*

ITALIAN: You kidnapper! You space cadet!

AUSTIN: I don't love you. I don't honor you. I don't cherish you. In fact, the sight of you makes me sick.

SAMI: Austin, you can't say that--I'm the mother of your child.

AUSTIN: That's the saddest thing of all--that Will has you for a



This could be an illustration of the ferns they have everywhere on Soaps — including in the kidnap cabin, or it might be Darcy's rendition of a truly thrilling trip to the hairdresser's mother. The only reason he does is because you drugged me and made me think I was making love to Carrie--your sister.



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Soap Star

by Jenny Shears

My dear friend (who wishes to remain nameless here) has wanted to act on a daytime soap ever since she was ten

years old. Even while deeply entrenched in Political Science and French studies at Boston University, she held onto her dream, and after graduating at the top of her class, she moved to New York to pursue that dream.



JENNY SHEARS: What appeals to you about soap operas?

SOAP STAR: They're so surreal. Because they are taped on video, everyone glows. And it's an outlet for fantasies. I personally always dream of playing the bad character, the bitch or the slut.

JENNY: Do you think that soap actors get to show how well they can act?

SS: That's not what soap operas are about. I mean, a night-time television show, they film one episode over the course of two weeks. In soaps, every single day a new episode is filmed, every single day. Being under that strain is such an education for hitting your cues, learning your lines fast, and being able to produce anything.

JENNY: Do the actors think it's serious drama or do they think the plots are insipid?

SS: I think most of them take it for exactly what it is, which is a fuckin' great job. You're on TV every single day, you get hair and makeup, and you get to do media spots, which to me is great. It is what it is. It's daytime drama. It's trite, it's overdramatic, melodramatic, it's silly. But everybody knows that. Nobody's going in there thinking this is Shakespeare. It's a



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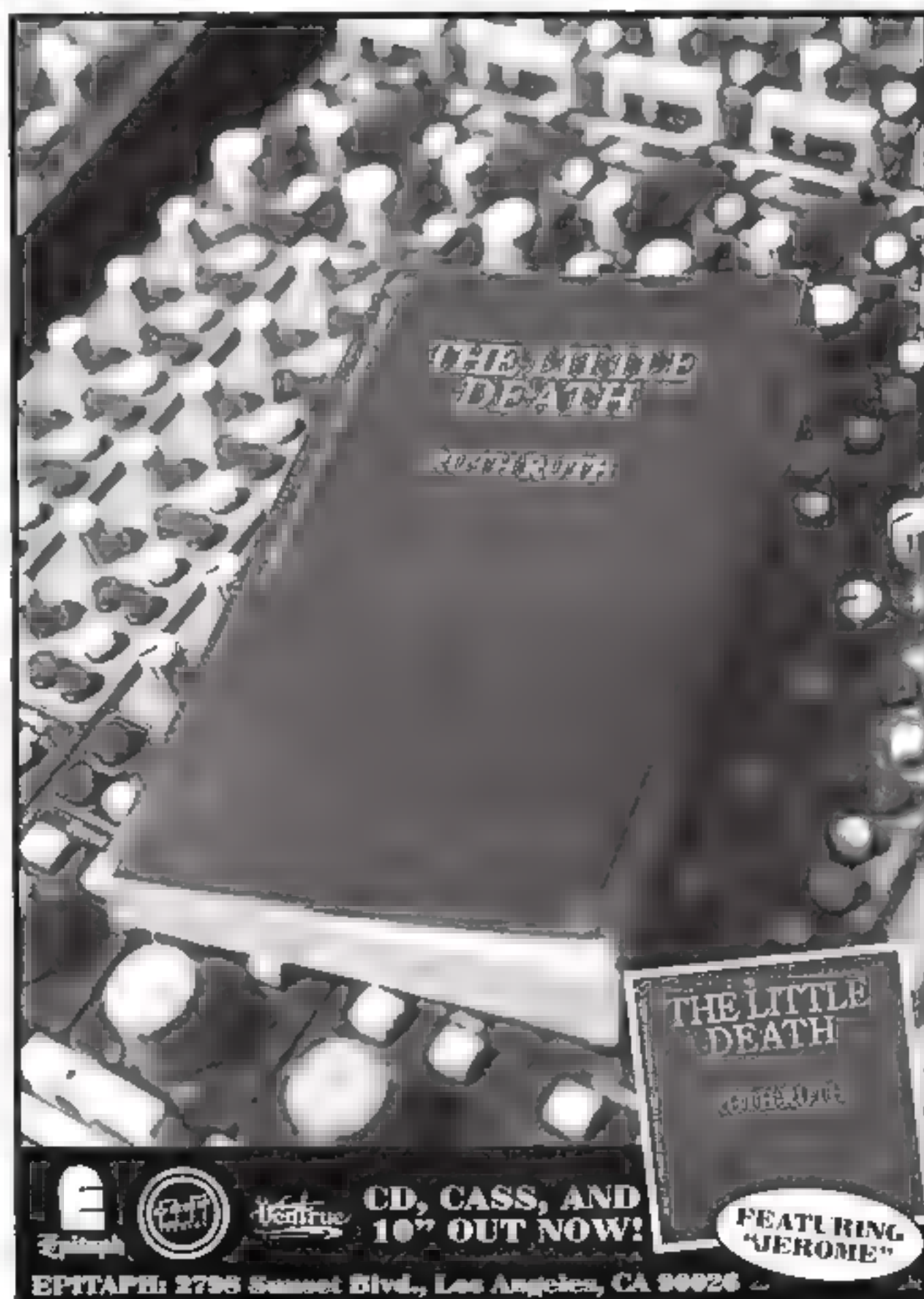
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job. Would you rather, like, pump gas?

JENNY: Right.

SS: Exactly. You make really good money. I love everything about it and every single day I create a new fantasy on how a new or different casting director from any of the shows has some sort of emergency and needs me to come in. Sometimes I have multiple fantasies where I get jobs on two soaps on the same day. It keeps me going.

JENNY: You've been on *Loving* and *One Life to Live*. How do they compare?

SS: Well, *Loving* was a half-hour show, OLTL is an hour show and just because of the time restraints OLTL was much more stressful. The stage manager at OLTL gets very hyper and yells at people a lot and things like that. *Loving* was great.

JENNY: Your friend is now an extra on *The City*. Has she said anything about Morgan Fairchild?

SS: They were very behind schedule when they first started shooting *The City*. One of the reasons being that Morgan Fairchild takes two hours in the makeup chair.

JENNY: How do you feel about Susan Lucci?

SS: Soap operas have moved away from that Susan Lucci thing, which is that diva thing. I mean, it's painful for me to watch her sometimes because she is so melodramatic. But so many people tune in just to see her. And she consistently delivers a wonderful, wonderful performance.

JENNY: So they've moved away from melodrama to what?

SS: A bit more realism. Not somebody who is stomping their foot, calling the mayor in the middle of the night to get their car out of impound. Now they try to touch on major issues like AIDS and homosexuality.

JENNY: What would you do if you had to do a love scene with someone with really bad breath?

SS: If they have really bad breath? Well, then you offer them a mint, and if they decline you say, "Mmmm, these are so yummy. You sure you don't want one?" And if they still decline, then you just bite the bullet and think, "\$850, \$850, \$850."

JENNY: What if you were kissing someone and they got a hard on?

SS: Well, I've not been in that position yet, but people say that it happens all the time.

JENNY: Really?

SOAP: Yes.

Two Ladies At My High School Reunion

by Lisa Carver

Wendy Frazer was in a gold get-up that looked like a high-tech prom dress, her anorexic shoulder blades like knives pushing the straps aside. She puffed on cigarettes non-stop and has two sons. I couldn't believe someone that anorexic can bear young. Her face still looks exactly like a pig--perfectly round, squinty eyes, turned-up snout. You always hear about anorexic people having a false view of themselves as fat, but this poor girl really *does* look like a pig, no matter how much her body wastes away. It must be super-frustrating. Devon Christensen, my escort, winked at her. He's a sucker for a high-tech gold prom dress.

Another woman was embracing and talking to me for a full ten minutes before I recognized her. I was thinking how tragically ugly she was--orange skin, no real chin, bulbous nose...and then I realized who it was. When we were in grade school, I thought she was so beautiful, like an angel. I guess 'cause she has green eyes. I figured if you have green eyes, you must be beautiful. On the bright side, she's the only one of my former classmates who appears to have ascended in social scale. Her haircut was unattractive, but it was an upperclass cut--

same with the dress. She seemed happy. I asked what she was doing, she said she was a housewife in Florida. I hope her husband looks at her with the same eyes I did in sixth grade.



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INCEST



Two overweight women circa 50 years old, one with orange hair (Helen, drummer for The Shaggs), one brunette (Nancy, the girlfriend of Helen's ex-husband) met us at a Chinese restaurant. Both wore blue eyeshadow and pink lipstick. Also present: Matt and Bea Jasper. This is the story of Helen's real life soap opera.

HELEN: My first kid--I didn't know what labor pains were, so I thought it was from drinking coffee all day. I almost had him at home. Didn't know I was pregnant with the second one till I was seven months pregnant.

NANCY: That happened to our neighbor just recently.

HELEN: She's 41. She's 41, but the husband's 56. He's got cirrhosis of the liver. He said he'd leave her if she got pregnant. Why he'd leave her is because he didn't want to die and leave her to bring the kid up on her own. She said, "I brought up three on my own already."

My friend just got married for the third time, but I didn't go to the wedding because my boyfriend Courtney went. Well, he's not my boyfriend anymore--I kicked him out and had a restraining order put on him. And all he talked about at the wedding was me.

MATT: A restraining order--that's dramatic.

HELEN: Then I found out it never went through--I was supposed to go back to the court, but the guy who was driving me said it was too hot to go back. It wasn't too hot; it was just that he couldn't wait to get home to his beer.

LISA: What made you and your husband decide to separate after 18 years together?

HELEN: It started I went out drinking with my friend Vicky. It was Thanksgiving '92. He said, "You can go out drinking, but don't come back." I came back, packed my clothes, and I been

gone since.

LISA: You got kicked out for going out drinking one time?

HELEN: No, not one time. When I was 42 or 43 he barred me from The Legion. That's where I'd go drinking. They wouldn't serve me anymore. I didn't play the field when I was younger. So I didn't know what it was like to go with this one and that one--different guys. So I did that at The Legion. My father didn't allow me to go out when I lived at home.

NANCY: Helen was home-schooled. She was not allowed to date. She met Henry when she was 28, he was her first boyfriend. They got married while her father was in the hospital. How many months was it before your father found out you were married?

HELEN: Three months. I [continued to live] at my parents' house.

NANCY: She was afraid to tell her father.

HELEN: One of Henry's co-workers finally called up my father and told him. My father went and got the shotgun.

LISA: So, you might say your father was a little strict.

HELEN: His three sisters had kids out of wedlock--he was afraid his daughters would turn out the same way.

NANCY: When Helen's father came out with the shotgun, Henry



Helen & Nancy

© 1996



Helen at home with coffee pot

went across the street to get the policeman, Tim. Tim said, "She's a legal adult. Helen, make up your mind--either stay with your father or go with your husband. Now." She packed her clothes and left with Henry.

HELEN: That night when I came to practice with the band I said to my father, "Do you want me to bring up anything special?" He said, "Yeah--a pint of whiskey." He died that same night. I think that's one thing that brought the humming on.

LISA: Humming?

HELEN: Tunes in the head.

LISA: Oh.

HELEN: I had three brothers, but I was my father's drinking buddy. Starting when I was 17. I'm surprised I'm not a worse alcoholic than I am. He thought I'd drink only a couple shots, but when he turned his back, I'd guzzle the bottle. [laughs]

LISA: What's your mom like?

HELEN: She's nice.

NANCY: She's a wonderful person. She is so sweet.

HELEN: In fact, my father used to beat us kids up *plus* her. Did I ever tell you about that bald spot she has, Nancy? He took ahold of her hair and pulled all of it out in that spot. To this day no hair's grown back. He made her quit work, she could never wear dresses--it was always slacks. The boyfriend I just broke up with--Courtney--was like that. Whatever they tell you, don't believe the

psychics. One told me I'd meet a good guy, and it turned out to be Courtney--and he wasn't a good guy. She told me, "You own a pair of red shoes, don't you? Wear them tonight and you'll meet a good guy." So I wore the red shoes and I met him. The guy I'm living with let him in to take a shower [after Helen and Courtney had broken up] because he'd been living on the street for two months. When he got out of the shower he saw I had a skirt on. He said, "You're not wearing *that*." I said, "You don't tell me what I'm not wearing." When I was with him, I couldn't have not only male friends, but no girl friends either. Like Vicky--she did my hair for 22 years. And he expects me to break up my friendship with her. He was very controlling, like my father.

NANCY: Her father was a good-looking man.

MATT: Was he charming or funny at times, besides being overbearing?

HELEN: Yeah. He'd say, "Well, it's too bad we weren't born rich or handsome--we got cheated out of both." [laughs] He always said he wanted to die "in the saddle." And he did--dropped dead having sex with my sister.

NANCY: He sexually molested all the sisters.

HELEN: And to this day she don't have sex with her husband hardly at all. He beat all my brothers and had sex with all us girls. Except for my middle sister. Every time he tried with her, he saw God.



Dad's drinking buddy

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